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Solicitor's Office Bows Out PMA and BAE to be Abolished Under New Plan

We have asked Mr. William Farrell, of the solicitor's office for a statement on the eve of the closing of that office. The statement follows:

"On behalf of the Staff of the Solicitor's Office and myself, I wish to take this opportunity to say 'Adieu' to all of our good friends in the U.S. D.A. It has been great to work with all of you and we shall miss seeing you. The cooperation we have received from you has been wonderful, and has been truly appreciated.

God bless you all!

William L. Farrell
Regional Attorney

In the words of a local Civil Service worker the present administration is dedicated to a reduction of federal expenditures and is "hard at it". This can take several different forms and one of them could be reshuffling functions, and regrouping agencies. Some such seems to have hit PMA and BAE in the latest Washington directive regarding local USDA folks. Production and Marketing Administration and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, as such, will be abolished and their functions taken over by two new agencies to be known as Agriculture Marketing Service and Commodity Stabilization Service.

This "death" sentence to PMA and BAE could work a hardship on many career employees in both agencies in the change-over of functions or it could mean little actual change in employment status in actuality. It depends a lot on the methods used in putting into effect the new projected reorganization.

(Please see page 3)

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Reorganization Charted

The projected reorganization of the Agricultural Department recently announced by Secretary Benson would regroup all present agencies into 4 main groups, as follows:

1. FEDERAL-STATE RELATIONS
2. MARKETING & FOREIGN AGRICULTURE
3. AGRICULTURAL STABILIZATION
4. AGRICULTURAL CREDIT

FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION will retain its independent status. PMA, BAE, and SCS are most affected by the change, REA, FHA, FCIC, and ACPS least.

Talk On Civil Service Given By Mr. Ray

At the monthly meeting of the USDA Board of Directors, an interesting and timely talk was given by Mr. Sam L. Ray, Deputy Regional Director of the 8th U.S. Civil Service Regional Office here in Dallas. As might have been expected, in view of the present disturbed state of job relations, Mr. Ray was deluged with questions after his talk, the subject of which was Civil Service functions and reduction in force procedure. Many of these questions are pertinent to employees of FHA, PMA, SCS, and BAE, who face loss of, or competition for, their jobs because of merger or transfer of these agencies.

We do not attempt in the following to quote Mr. Ray's exact words but to give as nearly as possible the same meaning and substance of his answers to the

(Continued on page 4)

CIVIL SERVICE REGULATIONS REGARDING THE PLACEMENT OF SEPARATED CAREER EMPLOYEES.

Career employees in applying for another job, will be examined under current competitive standards relating to the position applied for. If applicant has passed an appropriate competitive examination since March, 1946, received a Notice of Rating from any Civil Service Commission office, such rating will be used. However, should applicant's rating be based wholly or partly on training and experience, full credit (and a re-rating, if necessary) will be given for such training and experience received after the last application was made.

Applicants not having attained eligibility in open competition since March, 1946, will be required to compete in the written examination if a written examination is specified in the job announcement.

Applicants will be examined for the highest grade held for the particular position applied for, and also for any lower grades he is willing to accept if he has applied for a position for which a register is established from an open competitive examination. If application is for a position for which there is no register he will be examined at the highest grade to which he is entitled to priority certification and any lower grades he is willing to accept.

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To dream is well, But...

T O D A Y I S H E R E !

Dream not too much of what you'll do tomorrow,
How well you'll work perhaps another year;
Tomorrow's chance you do not need to borrow:
Today is here!

Boast not too much of mountains you will master,
The while you linger in the vale below;
To dream is well, but plodding brings us faster
To where we go.

Talk not too much about some new endeavor
You mean to make a little later on;
Who idles now will idle on forever
Till life is done.

Swear not some day to break some habit's fetter,
When this old year is dead and passed away;
If you have need of living wiser, better,
Begin today!

----Author unknown

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A girl who plays her cards right doesn't have to
do it playing solitaire.

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LEAVING? SOME "DO's & DON'T's"

These reminders are probably not necessary for most of you, but we give them for the benefit of those who might forget. If you are being terminated, transferred, or retired most of the following will be of pertinent interest.

LEAVE: Upon separation, transfer or change of leave reporting officer, check with your current leave officer to be sure all leave used has been covered with the proper filled-in applications, medical evidence, etc. Find out your leave balance, what type of leave settlement you will receive (lump-sum payment or transfer of leave credit.)

RETIREMENT: Any questions regarding your rights under the Civil Service Retirement Act may be directed to your supervisor or your personnel officer, or you may write to the nearest office of the Civil Service Commission.

CLEARANCES: Notify your supervisor in time for all necessary papers and forms to be filled out; return all unused transportation requests, identification cards, building passes, and unused receipt books, and all other governmental property for which you are accountable. Failure to comply may force your Area Chief of Administrative Services to hold up your final salary check or travel reimbursement.

CREDIT UNION MEMBERSHIP, GROUP HOSPITALIZATION, ETC. Consult with the appropriate officer of such groups about continuance or transfer of membership, and settlement of accounts.

MAILING ADDRESS: GIVE permanent mail address for mailing final salary check, bonds (and cash insufficient to buy another, if any), WL-2 form, final personnel action, etc.

The USDA Club News is published monthly at 912 South Ervay, fifth floor, Lowich Building. Send all news contributions to that address, or telephone the editor, ST-5611, extension 2044. Wantads welcome, but please keep 'em brief.

JAMES L. (Jimmy) HYLES

- EDITOR -

(NEW RETIREMENT PLAN...Continued)...

present Civil Service Retirement System retaining its independent status. This is in line with the wishes of the vast majority of both Federal employees and employee unions, who fear any merger with Social Security would weaken the financial structure of our retirement fund.

Mr. Kaplan's committee will explore such differences between CS and SS as the status of a survivor of a young man. Under Social Security at his death his family could draw up to a maximum of \$168.00 monthly, whereas he would not have family coverage if he had been paying into the retirement fund of CS less than 5 years, and up to a dozen years his family would be entitled to \$50.00 to \$75.00 monthly instead of the much higher amounts under Social Security. However, this doesn't tell all the story, and there is much to be said in favor of both sides. The entire question should be given careful study before any changes.

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PMA AND BAE TO BE ABOLISHED... Continued from P.1)

It is recalled that the old Resettlement Administration and later its successor Farm Security, finally became Farmers Home Administration, absorbing ECFL in the process, with little actual change in working conditions for most employees in either agency. As we see it—since the work of PMA and BAE will be continued, even if under a different aegis—those now carrying out the work will in most cases continue to do so—at least given the first chance at it. This is indicated in the projected retention of Mr. Howard Gordon, present PMA administrator in that capacity under the new setup. Although we are taking an optimistic viewpoint, your editor must point out that any editorial assumptions at this early stage is to some extent based on conjecture, as well as optimism.

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FEDERAL AGENCIES REMINDED OF PREFERRED STATUS OF DISPLACED CAREER SERVICE EMPLOYEES

President Eisenhower has directed that the heads of all federal agencies make every effort to give all available jobs to laid-off career employees wherever possible. This directive was given added force by a letter from Chairman Young of the Civil Service Commission to the heads of all agencies in the National capital to be transmitted to all field offices.

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LETTER OF APPRECIATION

"I want to express my thanks and sincere appreciation to the PMA Cheer Club for their gift of money to me when my house burned recently. I also want to thank each of the PMA employees who, individually, gave me gifts of money. Everyone has been so nice to me in every way. All of you have been so generous and kind".

/s/ JEAN CHILDRE,
PMA - Fiscal Division

"WORST IS OVER", says CSC Chairman Philip Young.

In a recent speech to the Society of Personnel Administration CSC Chairman Philip Young gave assurance that the worst is over as far as RIF's are concerned. He said that an additional 80,000 to 100,000 jobs might be abolished by June 30 but most of the reductions would be accomplished by not filling jobs as they became vacant. He said he "saw no tremendous change" in the federal job picture during the next few years.

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RETIREMENT PLAN UNDER STUDY BY SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Ways to improve the present Civil Service Retirement System is being studied by a committee appointed by the last Congress. It is under the chairmanship of Mr. Eliot Kaplan, New York attorney, and includes Philip Young, CSC, the Secretaries of Defense and the Treasury, Director of the Budget Bureau, and Chairman of the Board of Governors Federal Reserve Board.

The Committee is due to report to Congress early next year with its findings and recommendations. Mr. Kaplan, voicing opposition to any plan merging the CSC System with Social Security, says he hopes to offer a plan combining the best features of both with the (Next column, please)

MR. SAM RAY GIVES INTERESTING TALK (From page 1)

questions asked him:

RIF regulations, generally, provide that competing employees will be released in reverse order to their retention standing: first, non-status employees occupying indefinite positions (INDEFINITE); second, status employees with indefinite appointments or promotions (CAREER-CONDITIONAL); and third, status employees occupying permanent positions (CAREER). Each group is further sub-divided by veteran and non-veteran.

A competitive area is usually established as one particular field office of an agency. If the Department wants the competitive area widened to include additional offices, such a proposal may be made to the Civil Service Commission. It is a departmental matter insofar as making the decision as to whether or not the competitive area should be broadened. Transfer of functions and jobs from one agency to another is departmental business and not questioned by the CSC. If a regulation is violated in so doing, however, the Civil Service Commission would look into that.

If you are offered a job by your agency in another city as a result of a reduction in force and you refuse to go—for personal reasons—a career or career-conditional employee may apply to the CSC for assistance in being placed in positions in other agencies in the commuting area. If you are made a reasonable offer of a continuing position and you refuse it on the grounds that it is not reasonable, your refusal will not prejudice your appeal or referral rights but will remove further agency responsibility to place you in a job. You may then apply to the CSC for assistance as a Separated Career Employee. However, there are certain conditions that must be met before being placed on the separated career employee register.

Any offer of a continuing position should be in writing and the acceptance or refusal should be, also.

Anyone with status now serving in a permanent capacity who resigns and takes a temporary job elsewhere cannot be given a permanent job later. Let's say, for example, that you accept a temporary limited job and the agency has a permanent job available at the end of three months—you would not be eligible for the permanent appointment because of your break in service between the permanent and temporary jobs. The agency could only give you an indefinite appointment, putting you in Group II in a reduction in force. At the present time there are only a few specialized positions to which probational appointments are being made.

For purposes of ascertaining who is eligible for certain jobs within the "commuting area", the Dallas area includes Grand Prairie and Seagoville, but not Ft. Worth, even though many Dallas people do commute to jobs in Ft. Worth. It is not common enough to be a determining factor.

A copy of the retention register must be made available to all employees affected by a reduction in force (Next column, please)

Continued

(From bottom of right column)

however, it is not mandatory that an employee be shown a register on which his name does not appear.

The Civil Service Commission is not a "watchdog" for the workers in the sense of taking sides between management and labor. It does set up minimum standards below which agencies or departments cannot go. The Commission cannot guarantee you a job. It can, and does, safeguard certain rights which accrue to you through experience and seniority on your job.

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BILL FARRELL

TO RETIRE.

With the closing of the Solicitor's Office William F. Farrell, Chief Attorney, will ring down the curtain on 25 years of government service.

Bill came to work for the Department in 1935, starting with the Resettlement Administration and transferring to the Solicitor's Office in '37. At his retirement—which will become official December 31, he can look back over a long career that includes 3½ years with the Memphis office of the FBI as Agent-In-Charge at age 23. This was, and probably still is, a record. He was with the NRA a year.

Bill saw active service in WW I, emerging as a 1st. Lieutenant. He is a Penn State alumnus, receiving his law degree (LL.B) from Dickinson School of Law.

Bill's hobbies are fishing, football, baseball—and his two children, one of which is "the best swimmer in Texas!"

FOR SALE—A Pair of Registered Chinchillas—Female Carrying Young.

(PMA)*—MRS. MYRTAL JOHNSON,

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